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Presented

to his Honored Uncle,

Benjamin Goddard Esq.re of Brookline,

with the respectful regards

of the Author.

THE WORLD'S CATASTROPHE.

THE

WORLD'S CATASTROPHE:

AN

ESSAY OF IMAGINATION,

WITH

REVELATION IN VIEW.

BY HENRY GODDARD.

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THE WORLD'S CATASTROPHE.

SYNOPSIS OF CONTENTS.

The Earth must perish — the decree is signed —
The TIME, a secret in the Eternal Mind.
Th' approaching hour, its heralds shall declare,
The roar of thunder, and the lightnings' glare—
Earth's magazines in wild explosion rise,
Outpeal "the grand artillery of the skies" —
Whirlwind and flame their fearful power unite,
In prompt obedience to the God of Might —
The Ocean hears — and, rushing from the strand,
Returns to pour its fury on the land —
The opening vail in awful contrast shows
The realm of Glory — the abyss of woes.

DESCRIPTION.

A calm bright morning — and a moonlit eve,
Form one day more Jehovah deigns to give;
The birds — the spheres — their several anthems sing
In wonted praises to Creation's King —
All nature smiles — nor whispers aught of change —
Through field and wood, their joyous tenants range;
E'en reasoning man, too wise to feel alarm,
Sees not the tempest sleeping in the calm,
But paints the morrow beauteous as to-day;
Though *glad* like *them*, he adds no *grateful* lay.

To-morrow comes! its sun seems loth to rise —
Contending winds howl through the dreary skies —
Portentous omens mark the close of time,
When nature's dirge, the elements shall chime!
O'er the wide earth dark lowering vapors form,
Now fast converging for the final storm —
Convolving clouds in deepening blackness roll —
Thunder and tempest rage from pole to pole.

The spring-tide fields an autumn garb assume,
Nor mock their own, or nature's fall, with bloom —
The trees, stripped leafless, ne'er to bud again,
But spread their ashes o'er the grave of men.
Deep, fierce volcanoes wear their craters wide
With the vast volume of their molten tide;
While fresh volcanoes all around them roar,
Whose flaming cataracts exhaustless pour —
Earth's inmost fires no more their prison keep,
Burst through the sea! — upheave the boiling deep!
The feverish earth drinks in each river's flood;
With fearful throes then casts them all abroad; —
Ocean, recoiling, leaves its caverns dry —
Its upthrown depths, returning, sweep the sky. —

Instinct suspects — Man comprehends the scene —
For conscience, roused, has fixed its glance within.

Carnivorous tribes no more can danger brave,
But leave their prey, and seek *themselves* to save.

The lion, trembling, shrinks into his lair —
The eagle, cowering, shrieks a note of fear —
The serpent waits no more the bird to charm;
His quickened windings speak his first alarm —
Ocean's proud monarch now forgets his pride;
Deep in the abyss, leviathan would hide:
But frantic Ocean no protection shows;
Nor for *himself* finds safety or repose —
Mixed with his foam, the war-ship's fragments toss,—
Its last defender sinks a lifeless corse —
No floating mansion lives on all the deep —
The sons of ocean sleep their final sleep.

Now prostrate forests pave the whirlwind's path —
The swifter lightning bears Jehovah's wrath;
Kindles the widespread mass to seas of flame —
Stamps on their dust the terrors of His name.
The valleys rise, as conscious of the day —
Mountains and hills make haste to flee away —
The rocks--earth's outguards--trembling at their post,

Resist no more, but join the routed host,
Now rent to fragments — or in fusion lost.

The astonished Sun looks, and averts his light —
While the pale Moon turns paler with affright —
Shrouded — they cast no ray upon the gloom,
Leaving Earth's fires to light her to her tomb.
Now darkness, tenfold dark, the earth o'erspreads,
Veiling from man, the world on which he treads —
Pale, lurid meteors make each horror seen,
Nor finite power can interpose a screen.

Nature dissolves — her last grand scene is near —
All passion, else, is dead — and LIFE is fear! —

The fires are seen — the winds are heard no more —
The shrinking sea has ceased to shake the shore —
Volcanoes hush — the exhausted earthquakes sleep —
Earth's clouds of smoke are scattered o'er the deep —
A calm prevails — the restless tides are still —
Destruction pauses at its Author's will!

Lo! a new light of more than solar ray!
The Power that lit the sun, now pours the day!
Still o'er the scene a deep dead silence reigns —
Man's heart-streams, dry, or freezing in his veins. —
But hark! — the Archangel's trump the silence breaks!
The Earth, convulsing, to her centre quakes!
Swift in her orbit, now she meets the blast!
Thrown quivering back, she stands, like man, aghast!
A voice — the Eternal's — rends the tottering Earth —
Brings her last labor to the hour of birth —
Calls to the Grave! — Death's outpoured myriads range!
While all the living in a twinkling change!
Now, to be judged, these hosts on hosts are brought,
With *joy*, or *woe*, transcending speech or thought, —
The throne — the Enthroned — His guards in circling
rank! —
(Conception here must fill the awful blank! ——)

The Judgment closed — the assembled legions risen,
To share and swell the *unuttered* bliss of Heaven,

Soaring in robes of white, on seraph wing,
From blood-washed throngs, full Hallelujahs ring —
Glory to God, the Bethlehem note prolong,
In full fruition of Celestial song: —
Or, woe alike *unuttered*, gone to dwell
Where raging passions fan the flames of Hell —
Where, too, unpardoned sin in vain may try
God's omnipresent withering glance to fly —
Despair, sole monarch, rules with iron might —
And hope expires in everlasting night. —

Now, at command, the elements rush forth
To fiercer havoc of defenceless Earth:
Waters contest the victor's palm with fire.
This shows his mandate, and the seas retire.
Thus far the vigorous germs of earthquake lie
Deep, but not central — shaking earth and sky;
But closed within this outer globe of earth,
A world of fire had its coeval birth —

Asbestos walls surround this burning sea,
Till the last fiat set the prisoner free.
Then, conflagration sweeps its outward way ;
Earth's vitals now become an easy prey ;
Back from the heart her watery fluids rush,
Through countless veins the liquid currents gush ;
From clefts above, her boiling fountains pour,
Leap from their cauldrons, and return no more.
Now, mighty streams no more the deep supply,
But yield their tribute to the fervid sky ;
Their all ascends — the mightier flame pursues,
And dyes this azure vault with fiery hues —
O'er wasted Earth a scarlet pall unfurls —
A moral beacon to surrounding worlds !

Now instinct's myriad tribes in dust are lain,
And Death himself, the last dread conqueror, slain :
The melting skies no more allay their thirst —
Where once were seas, is nought but scorching dust.

Now Ocean's self has sunk — or fled in air —
From nought derived, they all to nought repair —
Earth, now a crumbling wreck —(destruction done)—
Her dross and ashes rushing to the Sun!
The o'erhanging firmament, without a base,
Flies off, collapsed, a scroll-wrapt cloud in space!—

My soul prepare — ere life's swift hours be flown,
Oh make thy Savior's *righteousness* thine own!

MISSIONARY HYMN.

WRITTEN 1846.

While Science, advancing, its banner unfurls —
To systems of Newton, adds thousands of worlds —
While Arts and Philosophy speed in the race,
And Steam and the Magnet annihilate space —

While Nature and Matter lie open to Mind,
Is the standard of Jesus to linger behind?
To which, as the clouds and the doves wing their way,
A nation of islands is born in a day.

Forgive us, Great God, that thy servants still sleep,
When the soul-stirring news echoes back to the deep,
That an Empire of Heathen — one-third of mankind —
Th' ingenious — the learned — the proud — the refined —
The ranks of Confucius — the aged, the youth,
Their Monarch invites to the Volume of Truth.

Arouse then to action — bid farewell to slumber —
The morn of Salvation has dawned on the East!
Renounce self-indulgence, and gird on your armor,
Ere stones become soldiers to conquer the *Beast!*

When Simeon and Anna rejoiced beyond measure,
They saw in far prospect the scenes of this day;
To *us* is reserved that *fruition* of pleasure,
The *taking possession* where Christ leads the way.

The Wise Men — the Shepherds — who lived at His coming,
In concert with Angels, sang praise at His birth:
More blessed, *we* hear of that *Peace* wide extending —
That *good will to men*, circumscribing the earth!

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